GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
DEFENCE
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1660
ANSWERED ON:25.11.2016
Dhruv Helicopters
Senguttuvan Shri Balasubramaniam

Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Advanced Light Helicopters, Dhruv exported to Ecuador have sustained a series of crashes;

(b) if so, whether Ecuador has suspended the operation of said helicopters and grounded the entire fleet and if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) has conducted any enquiry into the alleged crash of accidents to find out its cause and if so, the details thereof;

(d) whether the Government of Ecuador has advanced any reason for the large number of crashes of the Dhruv copters and if so, the details thereof; and

(e) whether the said incident has affected the export potential of the Dhruv copters and if so, the details thereof and corrective measures taken in this regard?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE (DR. SUBHASH BHAMRE)
IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE
????? ????? ?????? (??. ????? ?????)

(a) Yes, Madam. Out of seven Dhruv helicopters supplied to Ecuador, four (4) have crashed during the period October 2009 to January 2015.
(b) Dhruv helicopters were operating normally until January 2015. Post crashes in January 2015, Ecuador suspended operation of Dhruv helicopters.

(c) HAL, on its own, deputed its experts to Ecuador in each case of accident. Ecuador Government constituted Court of Inquiry (CoI) in each case. Being the Original Equipment Manufacturer (OEM), HAL also participated in the Court of Inquiry.

Court of Inquiry reports which have been released by Ecuador Government have concluded the cause of first two accidents as below:

(i) FAE 604 : Pilot Error
(ii) FAE 601 : Pilot Error

Two other Court of Inquiry reports have not been released by Ecuador Government, citing confidentiality. However, from the Flight Data Recorders (FDR) records analysed by HAL as part of Court of Inquiry proceedings, the following causes of accidents have emerged:

(i)
FAE 603 : Probable cause is PAO − Pilot Associated Oscillation (human error).

(ii) FAE 605 : Probable cause is "Failure of Tail Drive Shaft Attributed to Maintenance Lapse by Ecuadorian Team".

(d) Ecuador Government has not formally communicated to HAL or its local representative in this regard.

(e) The accident reports released by the Ecuador Government point to pilot errors in the first two cases.

HAL continues to pursue export of Dhruv helicopter in the light of enquires being received by the company.

The following corrective measures have been taken:

â€¢
To increase the export potential in global market, HAL has approached European Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) for Certification of ALH Dhruv helicopter.
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â€¢ Long Term Onsite Maintenance Support for 3-5 years will be proposed in future contracts.

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